

UTCC VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED TAXIDRIVERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED: GOUTTCC.ORG



Driver protesting UberX during UTCC action Feb. 17, 2015

The UberX Problem

The Problem—what is wrong with this picture?

BY PETER ALI ENGER

LET'S BE CLEAR ABOUT ONE THING—IT'S not just UberX. We cabdrivers use the term "Uber" as a reference that includes all of what has been termed the "TNP" industry. Another term we

like is "ridesteal". But in reality it's Lyft, Sidecar, and a host of upcoming like-minded Apps that are working around existing regulatory bodies worldwide to provide transportation options for citizens from other citizens with cars. All without the kinds of regulations the public has come to expect from the public transportation systems such as taxis, limos, buses and trains.

It's like "hitchhiking with smart phones", as one official put it last year at the hearing in Chicago City Council for the TNP legislation then under consideration. The official was from the IATR (International Association of Transportation Regulators), so we can assume he knew what he was talking about. Another speaker at that hearing mentioned that, when an African-American on the southside offers transportation for hire to his community—providing a much-needed service for underserved areas of the city—he is called a "gypsy cab" and when the Public Vehicle Investigators catch him, they impound his car and fine him up to a thousand dollars. But when multi-billion dollar companies like Uber or Lyft do it, they are called "innovators", "technology" companies, and "job creators", and praised and allowed to continue on with their business.

What is wrong with this picture? Ever since the "ridesteal", TNP industry arrived in Chicago and started doing the same work as cabdrivers—transportation for hire from point A to point B—without following any of the rules and regulations for public vehicles that taxis and limos do, we have been wondering just how they are getting away with it! We understood pretty quickly **why** they are getting away with it—for one thing, Ari Emanuel, Mayor Rahm Emanuel's brother, is a major investor in Uber. For another, the PR people at Uber were threatening to paint

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GO TO GOUTCC.ORG

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

VETERAN TAXI DRIVERS, REGISTERED VOTERS, AND REGULAR TAXI DRIVERS IN THE CITY OF Chicago are collecting signatures from all Public Chauffeur’s License holders in order to submit our petition to the City Council to revisit the issue of medallion lotteries to those that have twenty or more years of service in the taxi business.

Please see the attached pages for the enumerated reasons why it is necessary for the revisitation. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Committee of Taxi Drivers
For further details contact:
Duro Ogunsanya, Coordinator
(309) 291-1282

REACTIVATION OF THE TAXI MEDALLION LOTTERY

The arrival of ridesharing (TNP) transportation and the announcement of the results of comprehensive findings by the Chicago department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) that the cost of leasing vehicles by cabdrivers is so high that it is difficult to make a decent living.

Since the city is looking for ways to defray this staggering cost, it is pertinent to revisit the issuance of medallions to drivers with twenty or more years who have never won or owned a medallion in the previous lotteries.

The time is now ripe to reactivate the medallion lottery that was abruptly stopped by the City.

All the veteran drivers (twenty and above with good driving records) have no pension or retirement plans or benefits in place, unlike city workers and the politicians who might receive benefits after retirement. Owning a medallion would alleviate this old age problem.

Also, many neighborhoods in the city still suffer from underservice in their areas. Virtually little or no cabs in those areas. Meanwhile, suburban cabs and unlicensed vehicles have a field day roaming the city streets picking up fares.

Chicago would be able to generate more revenue from this endeavor, from licensing and transfer fees. Of course jobs will be created as well.

The following page enumerates some of the reasons why the city should consider this noble action: reactivation of the medallion lottery.

It is the best and the right decision for the following reasons:

1. It would relieve the cost of leasing to these drivers
2. It would generate more revenue to the city
3. It would reward drivers who have no pension or retirement plan—it is a form of compensation
4. It would improve service to the under-

- served neighborhoods immensely
5. Cab business is currently operating at less than capacity.
6. It would boost the morale of drivers and motivate them to give more than 100% of their best
7. Incentivise drivers to anticipate some reward
8. It would deter good drivers from going to other ridesharing businesses
9. No need to increase the fares for now (it might draw riders to the competition)
10. It would level the playing field and be fair to drivers who have never won medallions but who have put in many years of service to the people of Chicago

The myth that there are too many medallions has been proven wrong with the rise and growth of ridesharing.

The question is: should we stop students from graduating because of high unemployment? Or stop building cars because of too many cars on the streets? The answer is no. Let the market decide the results.

PLEASE SIGN ON FOR THE PETITION TO THE CITY OF CHICAGO FOR THE REACTIVATION OF MEDALLION LOTTERIES TO CABDRIVERS

CITY OF CHICAGO IS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO DEFRAY COST OF LEASING CABS TO DRIVERS—A LASTING SOLUTION IS THE LOTTERIES. THE TIME IS NOW RIPE TO REVISIT THE LOTTERIES.

CABDRIVERS HAVE NO BENEFITS, NO PENSIONS, NOR ANY FORM OF COMPENSATION FOR YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM OF CHICAGO. OUR ONLY OPTION IS TO SUFFER IN SILENCE AFTER ALL THE YEARS OF SERVICE.

RETIRE TO POVERTY, THIS NEEDS TO CHANGE, THE TIME IS NOW.

DISCLAIMER: The UTCC will occasionally publish a letter to the editor from drivers who deserve to have their voices heard. We do not necessarily endorse all the views contained in the letters to the editor feature.

THE UNHEARD MAJORITY

BY BRITTANY HARTHAN

THIS IS A PHRASE THAT CONSTANTLY RINGS through my head. We see it every day. Someone hates the policies of XYZ but only complains about it to their friends instead of writing letters to public officials, joining picket lines, and actually demanding that their voice be heard. Drivers receive tickets that they know are not right, but pay them and

complain about the injustice because they are so used to having the hammer dropped down on them. Some drivers say they want to be heard by the City and cab companies, but remain frustrated by not creating a united front.

That is the point of a union.

As a union that has been built by and for cab drivers in Chicago for the past seven years, the



OUR VISION

To organize and unify all licensed chauffeurs in the Chicago area, so we can collectively overcome oppression and achieve economic and social justice.

WRITERS

Fayez Khozindar, Chris Chandler, Peter Ali Enger, Duro Ogunsanya, Brittany Harthan

EDITORS

Chris Chandler
Peter Ali Enger
Kelly Donovan
Rocky Orok

DESIGN

Rachel K. Dooley

We welcome your contributions feedback and letters!

UNITED TAXIDRIVERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

2040 N Milwaukee Ave, 2nd Floor
Chicago, IL 60647

E-MAIL: utccchicago@gmail.com

PHONE: (773) 342-UTCC

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UTCC has made a conscious decision to not be a part of the unheard majority. As Chicago’s taxi union, we are here not to just take your union dues and promise you political clout and other things, but to create joint-empowerment *by* and *for* the cabbies. Have you consciously chosen to be a part of the unheard majority, sold yourself to bottom-down organizations, OR do you want to work side-by-side to have cab drivers’ voices be heard?

As most of you know, the UTCC office is located at 2040 N. Milwaukee Avenue and we are available as a resource and to offer support to drivers with

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IN THE NEWS

California Labor Commission Rules an Uber Driver is an Employee, Which Could Clobber the \$50 Billion Company

BY ALYSON SHONTELL, REPRINTED FROM BUSINESSINSIDER.COM

THE CALIFORNIA LABOR COMMISSION HAS ruled that an Uber driver is an employee, not a contractor, Reuters reports.

The decision was made after a San Francisco driver, Barbara Ann Berwick, filed a claim against the company.

The commission sided with her largely because it deemed Uber was “involved in every aspect of the operation.”

It’s potentially a huge blow to Uber’s business model, at least in California. There’s currently a class action suit going on in which drivers are suing Uber (and competitor Lyft) trying to get classified as employees rather than contractors.

Today’s decision is not part of that suit, but it could lend some ammunition to it.

Uber is appealing the board’s ruling.

In a statement, Uber said:

The California Labor Commission’s ruling is non-binding and applies to a single driver. Indeed it is contrary to a previous ruling by the same commission, which concluded in 2012 that the driver ‘performed services as an independent contractor, and not as a bona fide employee.’ Five other states have also come to the same conclusion.

By appealing the ruling in the California Superior Court, though, Uber could find itself establishing a precedent.

“If the decision gets affirmed, then it could be a broader precedent,” said Shannon Liss-Riordan, the attorney who is representing Uber drivers in a class-action suit against the company.

Even without the affirmation, Liss-Riordan said she can still use the decision to her advantage.

“I think it is significant that the California agency charged with upholding California labor laws determined this drive is an employee under the

law,” Liss-Riordan said. “Courts often give some deference to a state agency.”

Right now, Uber has hardly any costs other than its 1,000-plus employees in its San Francisco headquarters. Uber takes a percentage of every ride (20%-30%). It doesn’t employ drivers; it merely connects supply (user requests on its app) with demand (independent contract drivers who are roaming and have agreed to partner with Uber).

If all drivers there were classified as employees, Uber wouldn’t just be a logistics company printing money, at least in California.

The cost to run the business there would skyrocket. Uber would have to seriously consider downsizing the number of drivers it has as partners and provide benefits for them all.

Employees are expensive; companies have to pay Social Security and Medicare taxes for each employee among other things, according to the IRS. They don’t have to do any of that for independent contractors.

Also, drivers have to cover a lot of their expenses—gas, car maintenance, insurance—though Uber has begun to offer perks to offset some of these costs.

Let’s keep in mind that this ruling is only in California. Uber, which was last valued at about \$50 billion, has more than 1 million drivers worldwide.

While California is Uber’s largest market, the company operates in 311 cities and 58 countries, so this is a small percentage of Uber’s global business.

By the way, this ruling isn’t just a huge deal for Uber and Lyft. There have been a lot of “Uber for X” startups to follow in their wake: \$1 billion startup Instacart, for example, has contract workers deliver groceries; \$250 million startup Shyp has regular people mail things for customers.

If these companies, which are referred to as



the “1099 economy,” can no longer have independent contract workers, all of their business models are shot.

And if their business models are shot, that’s pretty bad news for investors who have been pouring unprecedented amounts of money into private companies over the past few years.

Their investments have allowed startups to stay private longer and avoid going public or getting acquired. That means venture capitalists and startup employees haven’t had much chance to gain liquidity.

So while Uber is a \$50 billion company on paper and investors look like gods who will get crazy returns someday, many haven’t actually gotten much cash back yet.

This concept — pouring lots of money into companies without seeing a cash return — is called a “dry bubble.” And as Uber board member Bill Gurly recently tweeted:

“Wet bubbles (1999) are more fun than dry ones (2015).”

Driverless cars are probably starting to look pretty good to Uber right about now. ■

Alderman Demands City Council Hearings on Impact of Ride Hailing on Taxicab Industry

BY FRAN SPIELMAN, REPRINTED FROM CHICAGO.SUNTIMES.COM

ASOUTH SIDE ALDERMAN IS DEMANDING City Council hearings to determine how to level the “uneven playing field” between taxicabs and ride-hailing companies that has caused medallion prices and taxidriver incomes to plummet.

Ald. Pat Dowell (3rd) on Wednesday introduced a resolution co-signed by half the City Council.

It calls for the License Committee to examine the “business practices” of ride-hailing companies such as Uber, whose investors include Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s brother, and determine the impact of a year-old ordinance that cabbies contend perpetuates a double-standard that has allowed ride-hailing companies to siphon away cab business.

Dowell said she doesn’t know what the ultimate outcome will be. She simply knows the City Council needs to do something to solve a problem that threatens the very existence of the taxicab industry.

“It’s an unfair competition. This unfair system has had an impact on the value of taxicab medallions in Chicago. Perhaps we can level the playing field,” Dowell said.

“These [ride-hailing] companies do their own

background checks. They don’t have the same training or oversight that cabdrivers have to submit to before they can drive. We need to look at maybe modifying the ride share ordinance to maybe address some of the problems we know are existing. The background checks. The license. The surge pricing. All the things they’re allowed to do that taxicab drivers can’t do.”

Uber spokeswoman Brooke Anderson said: “Since Uber first launched in Chicago, we’ve created thousands of job opportunities and generated tens of millions of dollars in total driver earnings. In addition, Uber offers safe, reliable rides to and from all neighborhoods, including those that have been underserved by taxi.

“We welcome any opportunity to discuss our ongoing work to improve communities and make transportation as reliable as running water for all Chicagoans.”

The ordinance approved last year does not regulate ride-hailing fares or “surge-pricing” and does not restrict the number of companies, vehicles or drivers that could operate on Chicago streets.

It also created a two-tier system that allows part-time drivers to escape rigid screening. And it opens the door to the lucrative airport market

that UberX once tried to enter illegally only to be stopped by the city.

Ride-hailing companies would be prohibited from picking up street fares or riders at McCormick Place, O’Hare and Midway airports “unless the commissioner determines, in duly promulgated rules, following consultation with the commissioner of aviation, that such pickups can be accomplished in a manner that preserves security, public safety and the orderly flow of traffic; and . . . designated taxicab stands or loading zones.”

During the mayoral campaign, Ald. Bob Fioretti (2nd) accused Emanuel of political favoritism, pointing to the conflict posed by Hollywood super-agent Ari Emanuel’s investment in Uber.

Emanuel flatly denied the political favoritism charge after pushing through the ride-hailing ordinance that, the taxicab industry maintains, did not go nearly far enough.

Last month, Emanuel stepped in for the second time in a year to block Uber from moving in on cabdrivers’ turf at O’Hare and Midway airports.

It happened after Uber started an online petition to persuade City Hall to let UberX drivers make airport pickups. ■

UTCC PRAISES TASK FORCE EFFORT BUT SEES RIDE SHARE THREAT

Calls for more regulatory changes for all public vehicle transportation

THE UNITED TAXIDRIVERS COMMUNITY Council welcomes the recommendations of the Taxicab Driver Fairness Task Force, and has every expectation that they will lead to some swift changes in policy. These recommendations, if properly implemented, can do much to improve the day-to-day working conditions for Chicago’s cab drivers.

“The most important recommendation is that the Task Force continue as an agency that allows cab drivers seats at the table in discussions about the taxi industry,” said Peter Ali Enger, secretary of the United Taxidriers Community Council, and Task Force member. “But unfortunately, unless something is done to level the playing field with ride share companies like Uber, the number of working cabs will continue to shrink, despite any reforms, and cab companies will go bankrupt.” Enger added.

Spokesperson Chris Chandler stated, “We only hope that these reforms to shore up the taxi industry and keep cabdrivers staying in the industry are not too little, too late.” Chandler added, “With a fleet of rideshare drivers that are double the number of available taxis, we will keep insisting to the city authorities that when we are talking about regulations for the cabdrivers, we should also be addressing regulations for the rest of the public vehicle fleet—the rideshare vehicles such as UberX and Lyft.”

The Task Force has been working since last December on a long list of changes to the rules that regulate cabdrivers, and on reforming the municipal code where it pertains to the cabdrivers. It has also been addressing reforms to the working rela-



Commissioner Guerra Lapacek with The Taxicab Fairness Task Force at the recent Town Hall Meeting June 17

tionships with city agencies such as the Chicago Police Department, which functions in a supervisory position to drivers, the Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of Finance, the Administrative Hearing facilities at 400 W. Superior, and the Dept. of Aviation officials at both airports. Some of the rule changes under discussion include removing vague language for violations that have been used in over-ticketing of drivers, providing opportunities for drivers to continue working while fighting possibly mis-assigned parking tickets or other debt, further clarifications for lease charges including streamlined processes for investigation and prosecution of lease overcharge complaints. There were

over 60 potential reforms discussed during the life of the Task Force since December of 2014.

The 17 member Taxi Driver Fairness Task Force is headed by commissioner Maria Guerra Lapacek of the department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, and includes 12 cabdrivers, representing organizations such as the UTCC and long time driver advocates such as George Kasp, David Mangum and Bill Burns.

The recommendations were presented on Wednesday, June 17, 2015, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. at the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) Building at 2102 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL. ■

Press Release of Drivers of the Taxicab Fairness Task Force

[the following press release was issued on June 5 by some of the drivers of the Taxicab Fairness Task Force. We held meetings and worked together to come up with a united message to let the media and the public know our views. The Task Force will be an ongoing committee to advocate and negotiate for drivers’ issues with various city departments. We need to have our own public voice. And now we do.]

WHO: CABDRIVER MEMBERS OF THE CHICAGO TAXICAB DRIVER FAIRNESS TASK FORCE

WHEN: JUNE 5, 2015

WHAT: STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO CITY ANNOUNCEMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS

We, the undersigned cabdriver members of the Mayor’s Taxicab Driver Fairness Task Force listed below would like to make the following statement:

We feel that the Recommendations produced are a step in the right direction and that the process was an open, honest, positive and constructive one. We have every hope that the concrete reforms we discussed over the last six months will be implemented in concrete legislation at City Council in the near future.

The proposed reforms of the rules and regulations, along with changes to the Municipal Code concerning how the cabdrivers are governed are long overdue. In addition, we are pleased at the formation of new official relationships between the cabdriver community and various city and state de-

partments. We are pleased with the formation of this Task Force and with the inclusion of cabdrivers in this process. We commend Commissioner Lapacek and her staff with their part in its advocacy and implementation.

We have three areas of concern.

- First, the Recommendations as written do not include any draft legislation nor any mechanism or process for implementation of the recommendations as written. We are calling for a timetable to be announced for the creation of such draft legislation for us to begin discussions and negotiations about.
- Second, in all the talk about reforming “regulations” in the taxi industry, we never got around to addressing the “regulations” regarding the newest addition to the public vehicle industry, the “rideshare” or TNP companies, such as UberX and Lyft. Our position is that any regulation reform for the taxis may be too little, too late if something is not done soon to “level the playing field” between our two sets of public vehicle operators.

The Taxi Industry is still losing drivers to attrition to the TNPs and the fleets and companies are heading for collapse and bankruptcy. We are calling for more legislative reforms to the TNP regulations.

- Third, none of the recommendations listed address the lack of a living wage for the cabdriver. All the recent reforms still do not bring our wages up to a standard for a “living wage”. The Chicago City Council recently came out in favor of raising the minimum wage to provide a living wage to low-wage earners. We are calling for a fare increase on the meter, and a legislative mechanism to address regular and measured increases in rates of fare for public vehicles to provide a guarantee of a living wage for the cabdriver.

We undersigned members of the Mayor’s Taxicab Drivers Fairness Task Force are pledged to continue to press for the aforementioned reforms and for accountability for implementation of the Recommendations.

- Karamjeet Singh (773) 719-8293
- Tarig Kamill (773) 590-9606
- Grace J. Szachor (774) 934-2675
- Peter Ali Enger (773) 550-7921
- Tariq Siddiqui (773) 419-4857
- George Kasp (312) 203-3305
- Karen Chamberlain. (773) 544-1143
- Dave Mangum. (312) 808-1000
- Bill Burns. (773) 593-3379

Mohamed Hashi Receives Settlement of \$7500 for Lease Overcharge!

MOHAMMED HASHI HAS BEEN A Chicago cabdriver for fifteen years. He has mostly been driving the wheelchair vehicles, and has driven for Adrian Tudor and Taxi Town from 2007 to 2011.

Mr. Hashi came to the UTCC office in the summer of 2013 with about five years worth of leases. He didn't have every lease but he had some leases for every year from 2013 going back to 2009. The most leases were for the year 2010.

After a thorough review, we confirmed that every lease had been overcharged, and we recommended that he file a complaint with the Dept. of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection for investigation, fines and restitution for the money that he had been overcharged. He filed his complaint in September of 2013.

After several interviews with the investigators from BACP, the case came up at 400 W Superior on Oct. 15, 2014. This case was for ONLY the leases from about a year's worth of leases in 2010. Mr. Hashi told us that during this first court date, Mr. Tudor brought in a stack of tickets that he tried to claim were tickets that Mr. Hashi was responsible for. After Mr. Hashi went to the Dept. of Finance and brought back his Canvas report which showed he had paid every ticket in his name and that he had a clean record, Mr. Tudor withdrew his claims. The case was continued to Jan. in 2015.

Mr. Hashi was lucky. At the court date in January, rather than fight the charges, Mr. Tudor pled liable and wrote the city a check. Mr. Hashi received a judgment for restitution of \$7500 in lease overcharges on Jan. 7, 2015. Mr. Tudor was lucky too. He got a fine of only \$500. This was a first offense for these charges against Mr. Tudor. There are still 3-4 years of more leases that the city is investigating for prosecution in the case of Mohamed Hashi.

As the UTCC has been advocating for streamlining the process for payment to the drivers, Mr. Hashi received his check by March of 2015!

Another example of VICTORY for the drivers, and the wisdom of working with the UTCC to achieve justice! ■



Mohamed Hashi with his judgment outside Taxi Town and check (right)

DOAH - Order



IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

CITY OF CHICAGO, a Municipal Corporation, Petitioner,)
v.)
Terra Taxi Two Corp)
6500 N WESTERN AV)
CHICAGO, IL 60645)

Address of Violation:)
2350 W Ogden)
Docket #: 14CS010813)
Issuing City)
Department: Business Affairs and Consumer Protection)

M. Hashi
CS# 28235
773-233-8955

DOAH - Order



IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

Sanction(s):
Restitution to aggrieved 3rd party \$7,500.00
Restitution to Hashi Mohamed.
Admin Costs: \$40.00
JUDGMENT TOTAL: \$540.00 plus \$7,500.00 Restitution
Balance Due: \$8,040.00

COPY



UTCC: YOUR ORGANIZATION!
a registered 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization

Two Drivers Finally Receive Their Checks For Lease Overcharge

AFTER BACP INTERVENTION, DEPT. OF Finance finally releases checks Nur Rage and Asmerom Goitom were two of the first seven cases UTCC helped file with BACP in May of 2012 for Lease Overcharges. We assisted 13 cabdrivers that first year, and many more since then. Most of the first 13 drivers received judgments and checks for restitution sometime in 2013. But there were a few cases which had dropped through the cracks. We contacted Nur and Asmerom in the summer of 2014 to see what had happened.

They told us that they had never heard anything about what happened to their cases. We arranged a meeting with the BACP staff and asked questions. It turned out that the city had won judgments in their cases, the companies had paid the fines and restitution but that the Dept. of Finance was holding onto their checks and had not notified them!

Once we knew the status of their checks, we requested that the BACP advocate for the checks to be released. They did that. It still took several more months for the Dept. of Finance to send Mr. Rage and Mr. Goitom their checks, but they finally got them.

Nur Rage received his check for a judgment and restitution against Khaled Mahmoud's garage at 2550 W. Lexington for \$2016. Khaled Mahmoud has since declared for bankruptcy and last we heard he has gone out of business. (not sure—check on that)

Asmerom Goitom received his check for judgment and restitution against Dispatch Taxi Affiliation for \$3440.

Recap of UTCC's Lease Overcharge campaign

When the UTCC was first formed, in 2008, the campaign of Lease Overcharges was the first one we took on. The lease cap at that time was \$493 for a 24-hour seven-day weekly lease, and almost every company was charging more than that. We started collecting leases so we could analyze them. We still have hundreds of leases in our office.

But we could not convince any drivers to sign the complaints! Drivers were afraid of retaliation by the companies, and they did not trust the city to do the right thing.

So we waited. By the time of the taxi strike in 2012, the drivers started to trust the UTCC and we convinced 13 drivers to bring us their leases, and to sign complaints with the city. The Dept. of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (DBACP) has a complaint system that drivers can use against the companies. We didn't know at that time whether the city would actually do the right thing, and investigate the companies and force them to pay the drivers when they overcharge them.

The first complaints we helped the drivers file were in May of 2012. As some of you know, we got our first victory almost a year later, when the city won the case against Dispatch for Sandra V. for six months of lease overcharge and she got a judgment of \$5370.

We have had many more victories for drivers since then, and we continue to analyze, investigate, facilitate and advocate for drivers who bring us their leases. We have become the experts in this field, and sometimes even advise the city attorneys and investigators exactly how the companies are cheating us. The companies can be tricky sometimes.

If you feel you might be being overcharged on your leases, bring them to our offices at 2040 N. Milwaukee, and we can analyze them and give you advice on how to file your complaint. We have found that when drivers work with the UTCC, they get better results. Your union—working hard for you! ARE YOU A MEMBER YET? ■



Nur Rage with his order from Khaled Mahmoud for restitution of \$2016

DOAH - Order



IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

CITY OF CHICAGO, a Municipal Corporation, Petitioner,)
v.)

Chicago Taxi Medallion Mgmt Inc
2550 W LEXINGTON
CHICAGO, IL 60612

Address of Violation:

5200 N Otto

Docket #: 12CS007726

Issuing City

, Respondent.) Department: Business Affairs and Consumer Protection

DOAH - Order



IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

Sanction(s):

Restitution to aggrieved 3rd party \$2,016.00

\$2,016.00 is restitution is payable to Nur Rage (CS# 86701)

Admin Costs: \$40.00

JUDGMENT TOTAL: \$540.00 plus \$2,016.00 Restitution

Balance Due: \$2,556.00

DOAH - Order



IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

CITY OF CHICAGO, a Municipal Corporation, Petitioner,)
v.)

Dispatch Taxi Management Llc
4536 N ELSTON
CHICAGO, IL 60630

Address of Violation:

4536 N Elston

Docket #: 12CS008739

Issuing City

, Respondent.) Department: Business Affairs and Consumer Protection

DOAH - Order



IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

Sanction(s):

Restitution to aggrieved 3rd party \$3,440.00

\$3,440 payable to [REDACTED]

Admin Costs: \$40.00

JUDGMENT TOTAL: \$1,040.00 plus \$3,440.00 Restitution

Balance Due: \$4,480.00

THE UNHEARD MAJORITY

Continued from Page 2

whatever grievances they have. Our office hours are Monday through Wednesday 1-7 pm and we can be reached at any time via phone (773) 342-UTCC (8822) 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This is particularly important because issues can happen at any moment and we are Chicago's cab union that is actively assisting drivers with any and all of the problems encountered. Whether it be lease over-charge cases, 400 West Superior problems, undeserved and unjust assigned and written tickets, customer brutality, and other encounters of injustice while on the streets of Chicago, the UTCC is here to help all the cabdriver brothers and sisters. Help us, help each other.

This is a new section of *The Voice* which will feature recent driver stories, how they have come to the UTCC office with their cases and how we have taken actions to assist them in acquiring just outcomes. We cannot help every cabdriver, but we do the best we can and we have the most experience. We hope that this will help other drivers understand the processes by which specific cases are handled, how we operate as a resource in the cab driver community, and encourage empowerment among Chicago drivers. Individuals working together is what creates a union and when others understand that their brothers and sisters are engaging and enforcing their own rights, it strengthens the community-at-large.

So, what are you waiting for? The UTCC is right around the corner.

Ahsan U. Khan's story

Farman U. Khan came to our office on January 7, 2015 with issues he was having as his brother, Ahsan U. Khan, who was ill at the time, attempted to transfer his medallion to his sister-in-law at the end of November in 2014. He was told that he owed the city \$1,300 for a license violation for a food establishment which Ahsan had never owned. The issue was that he was being charged for a violation under another person, Ahsan (NMI) Khan, who had, in fact, owned a restaurant and had been fined. When Ahsan and his brother went to city hall in late-December, he spoke with a female city employee, and explained the discrepancies. The city clerk's response was to offer a deal for a reduction in the charges, from \$1,300 to \$833.74. The brothers disagreed with having to pay *any* fines for something that was not Ahsan's tickets to begin with! They were then directed to 740 N. Sheffield. After filing a FOIA (Freedom Of Information Act) request, they discovered that not only was this a different person but the ticket was from October 25, 2001, and Ahsan U. Khan had been allowed by the city to renew his chauffeur's license for the previous fourteen years and then was red flagged. With this information, the



Mr. Saleh Markatya obtains his permanent Chauffeur's License with the help of his taxi union, the UTCC

UTCC was able to create an Incident Report and written statement with Farman U. Khan, to which Ahsan U. Khan validated and used this to contact the BACP. Shortly after, there was received a notice from the BACP that there was never, nor was there currently, a hold on Ahsan U. Khan's account. Mr. Khan was told that if there was any issues with renewal past that point, that the name of the auditor should be given to the responding attorney at the BACP.

Tesfaldet Abraham's story

On November 19, 2014, Tesfaldet Abraham came to the office at 2040 N. Milwaukee to fill out an Incident Report with the UTCC about a hold on his account. Mr. Abraham had gone to City Hall on November 13, 2014 to finalize payments for previous tickets and ask for clearance for his chauffeur license renewal. He was told that he had tickets written on Unique Auto Repair and Body Shop which he had owned from 1999 to December 15, 2003. He was told he had an outstanding payment which needed to be made in order to get his clearance. When he asked what the dates were for these allegations, the city worker said it was between 2006 and 2008—three years *after* he had sold the business—but the charges remained. Tesfaldet came to our office with the sales agreement, trust deed and other documents from his lawyer at the time of the sale to prove this and filled out an Incident Report. We assisted Tesfaldet with a written statement of the case and delivered manila folders with the documents of sale of the business, the initial paperwork from the Department of Finance, and a signed letter from his attorney at the time of sale to the BACP requesting that Tesfaldet be granted a temporary chauffeurs license while the tickets were cleared from his record. This was granted the next day and the charges have been re-

moved from Mr. Abraham's name.

Saleh Markatya's story

Mr. Saleh Markatya, went to renew his chauffeur's license on April 20, 2015. He was informed that he had city debt which had accumulated with interest to a total of \$4,107.51. This debt was from a judgement against him at AH on June 12, 2001 of \$1,600. Mr. Markatya stated that he has renewed his Chauffeur's license every year for fourteen years, had cleared his record of any debt, and declared under oath that he owed no debt to the city every year when he renewed his chauffeur's license. Upon filing a FOIA to discover what the original debt was for, he was informed that the city had no record of his debt or any original violation that would result in this judgement.

Mr. Markatya proceeded to go the United Taxidivers Community Council office to file an Incident Report on May 18, 2015. We forwarded the Incident Report to the BACP with a request that Mr. Markatya be granted a temporary license while he contested the nonexisting debt. The BACP officials advised the UTCC to tell Mr. Markatya that there would be no problem renewing his license. The following morning, Tuesday, May 19, 2015 he went to the Ogden Office as advised by Mr. Peter Ali Enger. When Mr. Markatya went to the Ogden Office to get to his license he could overhear the female front desk clerk at terminal three, where he was at, asking another female colleague at terminal four to see a note in terminal three. Mr. Markatya overheard the terminal three female clerk stating to the terminal four clerk that the Statue of Limitations was ten years for parking ticket debt.

Mr. Markatya was then informed that he would be able to go and get renewal of his permanent Chauffeur's License. At five o'clock pm on the same day, Tuesday, May 19, 2015, Mr. Markatya received a phone call from City Attorney Bridget Sierra, telling Mr. Markatya that his debt was cleared officially and if Mr. Markatya wanted an email she could send one, personally, or he could pick up a copy in person from her. Mr. Markatya went the following day, Wednesday, May 20, 2015, and picked up the debt clearance copy from City Attorney Bridget Sierra.

Since the incident, Saleh Markatya has been an eager supporter of the United Taxidivers Community Council. He has been inspired by the way we worked with him to get just results in his case and has become a fully-paid member. He has also joined the Steering Committee with the aim of helping other drivers. His main focus will be on trying to amend the statute of limitations for parking ticket debt collections in order to reduce the suffering which it has caused to many drivers. ■

ARE YOU A MEMBER YET?

In its seven and a half years of existence, the UTCC has developed official and professional relationships with: BACP, the DOF, AH (400 W. Superior), the Depts. of Aviation at O'Hare and Midway, the CPD, lawyers and law firms, taxi organizations around the country and others. These are relationships that we have the experience and track record for addressing and resolving issues for the benefit of the cabdriver community here in Chicago. **This is why YOU need to join YOUR TAXI UNION—the UTCC. ARE YOU A MEMBER YET?**

Call (773) 342-8822 or visit GOUTCC.org for more information

The UberX Problem

Continued from Page 1

Chicago as a technology-hostile city, and at the same time promising to promote Chicago as a technology-friendly city and encourage IT companies to come here. Chicago politicians, being easily swayed by lobbyists and the Mayor's persuasive talents, went along with the program. We in the taxi industry were not so fooled.

What the law and dictionary say in plain English

Here, before I go any further, let me quote chapter and verse:

Two definitions from the web, a 'taxi' is:

"An automobile that carries passengers for a fare usually determined by the distance traveled", and:

"An automobile that carries passengers for a fare, usually calculated by a taximeter."

This is from the Municipal Code of Chicago: 9-112-020 License required.

- (a) It is unlawful for any person to operate a motor vehicle, or for the registered owner thereof to permit it to be operated, for the transportation of passengers for hire within the city unless it is licensed by the city as a taxicab pursuant to this chapter, or as a public passenger vehicle pursuant to Chapter 9-114.
- (c) It shall be unlawful for any taxicab or public passenger vehicle not licensed as such by the city to solicit or accept business within the corporate boundaries of the City of Chicago.
- (e) Any person who solicits or transports passengers for hire, and the registered owner of any motor vehicle who permits such solicitation and transportation, in violation of this chapter, are subject to fines, vehicle impoundment, and other applicable penalties.

You see, cabdrivers are smart. We know a taxicab when we see one. You can call Lyft and UberX "technology" or "IT" companies all you want, or even the disingenuous "Transportation Network Providers"—we cabdrivers know that they are taxis. They do everything a taxi does—respond to calls for transportation (just because it uses a different technology doesn't make it any different than phone-in computerized dispatch calls, or the old two-way radio dispatched calls—the result is the same), pick up the passengers needing transportation, accepting the request to transport them to their preferred destination, and charge them a fee for the service. Just because the "fee" is calculated through a metered formula created by the App company doesn't make it not a taximeter. Any fool can see the concept is the same. Even the politicians who created the MCC knew what a taxicab was and defined what authority the city has over the industry. So what happened to everyone's sense?

UberX is a taxi. Period.

UberX is a taxi. An unregulated, underregulated, non-regulated, lightly-regulated taxi. By whatever other names people try to call it—it's still a taxi. And what the TNP drivers and companies do is illegal—at least according to the MCC chapters I quoted above. So what has happened to our local politicians and regulators, that they could so blatantly ignore their own laws and ordinances when it comes to this new, disruptive feature of our local transportation industry? There are cities, states and whole countries that are banning the TNPs, or finding ways to bring them into compliance with existing regulations—all in the name of public safety, and to protect the local transportation industry stakeholders. What is wrong with this picture in Chicago?

Cabdrivers want to know—will we have jobs worth having in the future? Medallion owners want to know—who will reimburse them for the investments they have made in following the



rules and regulations of the existing transportation-for-hire industry called the Taxi Industry? Who will reimburse them for their losses from foolishly following the rules? Citizens want to know—how can they have confidence in their transportation options when the local politicians and regulatory bodies have let them down so badly? Who is minding the store? Who is watching out for public safety? No city safety inspections on the vehicles (cabs are inspected twice a year). No governmental, fingerprinted background checks on drivers driving "public vehicles". No commercial insurance on vehicles being used for commerce resulting in questions about sufficient insurance for the protection of the public. What is to be done? What is going to happen?

We've had this conversation before

So now we get to the gist of my essay. Let's take a little trip into the past. The fact is, as a society, we have had this conversation before. Back in the late 1800s and leading into the early 1900s, the modern industry of public transportation began to take form, and private enterprise led the way. First there were trolleys, then subway trains, then finally buses and taxicabs. These were all privately owned. Private companies ran separate trolley lines, separate subway lines, separate bus lines, and taxicab companies. Each company would set their own fares, establish their own safety standards, and hire whomever they wanted. Guess what? It was a mess!

Over the course of time, lots of bad things happened. Because private companies look to their bottom line rather than prioritize public safety, accidents happened. Bad accidents. Fares would be inconsistent with the ability of the public to pay, and inconsistent with each other. Sometimes the workers would be of questionable merit, not properly trained, or even from the criminal class. So there eventually came a public outcry. The PUBLIC demanded that the cities take over the job of either managing public transportation or regulating public transportation, or both. So there was a sea change all across this country, and all across the world. It became the recognized DUTY of cities and nations to regulate and manage public transportation. For the public good. And that's how it stood until very recently.

Now flash forward up to the 1960s. In the 1960's and into the 1970s, young people—and older people too—could get anywhere in the country for free. Local, or long-distance transportation was available by simply sticking out your thumb! Hitchhiking became commonplace all over the country, and it was easy to get rides to anywhere. But by the end of the 1970s, no one was hitchhiking anymore. Why? Because lots of bad things happened. Rapes. Robberies. Murders. Kidnappings. Even serial killers who took advantage of the situation.

Eventually, governmental authorities stepped in and passed laws and regulations restricting and/or banning hitchhiking. It became commonly understood that hitchhiking is dangerous, and no one should do it. That is the situation today. People can still hitchhike, but it is much more difficult, and it takes a long time to get anywhere. And it is still considered dangerous.

What is going to happen?

The question everyone asks is, what is going to happen? Will taxis disappear, and UberX and the TNPs take over? Will city authorities just give up the revenue streams that the regulations on the Taxi Industry provided? Will the public just accept that public transportation will now be provided by private companies (UberX-buses, anyone?), and that they can charge whatever they want? Will the medallion system survive? Will taxi drivers who have made it their career to serve the riding public have no option but to join the unlimited numbers of TNP drivers and try to compete for the ever-shrinking piece of that economic pie? (Remember—most TNP drivers only drive part-time, and have other jobs. They have the option to only come out to work during surge pricing. Cabdrivers who have made it our careers to provide public transportation do not have those options. When it's hard to make money, our only option is to drive more and longer hours.)



My prediction for the future—bad stuff will happen

In conclusion, I am going to make a prediction. The prediction is this: ultimately, the governmental authorities, in this case probably the federal government, will have to step in and limit or ban the TNP industry. For the following reasons.

We have currently two sets of populations at play here. First we have the (mostly) younger generation, who like the ease of calling TNPs using their smartphones, and who like paying less for their rides. But it's not only the convenience of it. They will stand right in front of an empty cab (the ultimate in convenience—it's right there, 5 feet away!) and call an "uber" on their phone, and wait five minutes for it to show up. And it cannot be only the cheaper prices. Often they'll call a limo in the same situation, and limos charge substantially more than taxis, even Uber limos. So this population of mostly younger people are used to coming out of their houses, out of the bars, clubs, restaurants, and getting into private cars without checking and getting a ride for payment.

The other set of population is the TNP drivers, who have become used to using their private cars to drive around, picking up people and taking them places for money. Sure, they're us-

ing the App now, but who will stop them from soliciting fares from the street? At some point they will wonder, “Why am I kicking up part of my money to Uber? (or Lyft, or Sidecar?). I can just make a side deal with the customers—forget the App, just pay me cash or credit card on my Square, and I’ll take the customers where they want to go.”

This is already happening. I myself have been solicited by an alleged UberX driver. “Do you need a ride?” he asked me, waving his Uber phone. “Who are you?” I asked. “I’m an Uber driver.” “I don’t have the Uber App,” I replied. “That’s OK—we can make a deal,” he offered. I refused. But don’t think it was the first and only time it has happened. (Even Uber taxi drivers are now accepting Uber-generated fares, calling the customers, canceling the fares, and picking them up anyway and accepting cash or credit cards for the fare. But they have a good reason—Uber started charging taxi drivers 20% of their metered fares as their fee for using their App E-hailing system earlier this year—an exorbitant fee!)

The problem that I foresee given the practices of these two populations is the introduction of the criminal class. The population subset who will take advantage of the given situation, with no moral compunctions to hold them back from doing harm or wrong. Remember the bad things that happened one hundred years ago? With no oversight nor adequate enforcement of weak regulations, bad things will happen again. They already are, with TNP drivers who have not been properly vetted by government background checks, and by Uber policies of not wanting to share their database of just who is on their “platform” (i.e. working for them). Remember the bad things that happened with the hitchhiking situation in the ‘60s? Those things will start happening again too. How hard would it be for a person desiring to do harm to solicit some drunken young people to getting in their private cars for a ride home? I imagine it would not be hard at all. And with this criminal class entering the scene, it’s not even a matter of the Uber database or background checks anymore. It is just sheer stupidity, plus opportunistic, bad-intentioned criminals, and BAM!—mayhem!

I believe this intersection of the three populations—the naïve young people willing and used to getting into unmarked private vehicles for transportation options, the drivers who have gotten used to driving around making money in their private cars, and the soon-to-take-advantage-of-this-situation, opportunistic criminal classes—will very soon result in a whole bunch of bad things happening. And it won’t take ten or fifteen years to seep into the public consciousness, like it did in the ‘60s and ‘70s. Given the nature of the online community and the 24-hour news cycle, it should happen rather quickly. We can only hope that the bad things aren’t too bad, and that UberX and their like get the most of the blame. Then we can get back to a proper relationship between regulation of public transportation, enforcement, and public policy having its primary concern being public safety and public service.

Let’s hope it happens sooner rather than later. It will take the public making a public outcry, like they did one hundred years ago, to effect any positive and substantial change. And this time it needs to be the federal government setting that policy, not the hundreds of local city and state policy makers. It is too easy for a \$40 billion dollar behemoth like Uber to pay off local politicians. Let’s keep on educating the public, educating our policy makers, and pointing out the illogic and inconsistencies of public officials not enforcing laws already on the books, and pretending not to understand the plain English of the ordinances. ■



The UTCC has long been lobbying the Airport officials, the BACP and the Mayor’s office for reforms at the O’Hare and Midway Staging Area for taxicabs. From rebuilding the shelters and the bathrooms, regular maintenance of the structures, improved and increased food options to protections for our Muslim sisters and brothers from the elements and from traffic hazards when they pray, and especially during Ramadan. The tent is a temporary structure for this year’s Ramadan, and the barriers around the impromptu prayer area at Midway were requests made by the UTCC. There will be many more reforms that the UTCC can and will take credit for at both airports in the coming months. The UTCC—your Chicago Taxi Union. ARE YOU A MEMBER YET?

The Month of Ramadan

or—what are all my Muslim brother-cabdrivers up to this month?

And how come it happens at different times each year?

The holy month of *Ramadan* will start soon, during which more than one billion Muslims will observe the fasting and other religious rituals all over the world. It is the ninth month in the Muslim lunar calendar, and the name is derived from the word *Ramdaa* in Arabic, which means the scorching heat. It was and still is the favorite month for worshippers who were promised multiple rewards for their charity and good deeds. It happens at different times because the Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar, and follows the moon and not the sun. The lunar month is usually 29 or 30 days, and the lunar year is 354 days.

Ramadan is the month in which the Qur’an was revealed to Mohammed and sent down as clear guidance for the people who became his followers. It is a sacred month to the religion of Islam. It is the month in which Muslims believe that good deeds are considered multiplied and sins reduced.

If anyone observes fasting believing in its obligation and anticipating its rewards, all their previous sins are obliterated. For anyone who observes ‘*Umrah*, his or her ‘*Umrah*, is equal to the reward of pilgrimage. In this month the gates of paradise are opened and faithful people increase good deeds. The gates of Hellfire are shut down and sinful acts reduced. Devils are chained, so they are no longer be able to affect faithful people as they do in other times.

Muslims will fast from *Fajr* time (just before sunrise) till *Maghrib* (sunset). This means Mus-

lims will be fasting about 16 hours every day of this month. What it means to be fasting is no food or drink during the daylight hours, but also, no bad behaviors or sex for the same period while fasting.

At sunset, Muslims break their fast and pray. Later on they will go to a nearby mosque to pray *Ishaa* and *Taraweeh*. After that they go home and sleep and wake up just before dawn to eat a small meal and drink some water. They wait few minutes for *Fajr* prayer and then they go to sleep for a little while before they go to work.

It is a part of Muslims’ faith practices to keep away from obscenity, falsehood and its application during the fast, because whoever does not abandon falsehood and its application and foolish behavior, Allah will be in no need that he abandons food and drink. Further, is the belief of Muslims to perform the obligatory prayers in the regular time in congregational manner. This is why we join together in prayer during this month more often than in other times of the year. Muslims perform as much prayer as they can, take heed to keep in mind remembrance of Allah, recite the Holy Qur’an and give charity as they can. Muslims are mindful to beware of all Allah has prohibited them to do like backbiting, cheating, telling lies and vain speech and foul language and if one of them is being cursed or provoked, he or she might say, “*Al-lahoma inni sa’em*”—O Allah, I am fasting.

I conclude with this from the Holy Qur’an; “*O ye believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self restraint*” (*Al-Baqarah: 183*)

—FAYEZ KHOZINDAR

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

My Brush With Danger

Suspect Later Arrested For Knife Robberies of Cabdrivers

BY PETER ALI ENGER

ON SATURDAY, APRIL 25, I WOKE UP ABOUT 3 pm in the afternoon. I checked the news and my email, and I discovered that there had been a report of several robberies of cabdrivers at knifepoint in the last week. His robbery pattern was to take a cab to a northside location, and then show a knife and rob the cabdrivers. The news reports said he had taken his two victims to 2800 W. Ardmore, and to 2400 W. Eastwood. The report also mentioned a description of the robber—a black male 18-25 years old, wearing a hoody, carrying a bag, 6 ft. tall and 140 lbs. He was young, black and skinny. This was a description of hundreds of young black males around the city, and did not really help any. I went to work.

At 5 am at Division and Milwaukee, a young, skinny black male got into my cab. He wanted to go to Western and Eastwood. This triggered my suspicion, as it was exactly the intersection where one of the robberies occurred. I turned around to look at him and he fit the rest of the description too. I got real nervous. I declined to take him, stating I needed to turn in my cab in 20 minutes on the south side. He argued with me for a minute, and then exited my cab.

I then observed him for about 15 minutes of trying to flag down a taxi. I called in my suspicions to

the number from the police report. They suggested I call 911. I did, but the 911 operator was not very responsive, and no police showed up. When he got in Flash Taxi #6718 I followed them up to Western and Eastwood.

I called 911 again when we were on the way. Again, the 911 operator was not very responsive. Of course, the young man had not done anything yet, but I was very nervous for my fellow brother cab driver, just in case this was the same guy.

When the Flash taxi pulled over at Western and Eastwood, I pulled up behind him and flashed my brights to let both of them know someone was watching. They pulled into the 7-11 there. A fellow cabdriver that I was on the phone with suggested that I pull up alongside of them. I did. I asked the driver (Saeed Abbasi) if everything was OK. The Flash driver told me that his passenger was claiming he didn't have any money. The young man rolled down his window. It was obvious he recognized me. I told him, "You better pay the man! He brought you all this way and now you owe him money!" After a bit of back and forth, he got out and ran away. We both followed him in our cars to Wilson and Claremont and then lost him.

I had reported to 911 the situation in two

calls on the way to Western and Eastwood. And again after the theft of service. But no police ever showed up. Saeed and I waited about 15 minutes for the police. It turned out that Saeed had no idea about the other robberies, but that he was suspicious of the passenger.

He did a very smart thing. He asked him a series of questions.

"Where are you coming from?" Answer: "Just getting off work."

"Where do you work?" Answer: "A Mexican nightclub."

"What is the name of the club?" Answer: "I don't know."

"How much do you make?" Answer: "Twenty-four dollars an hour."

To Saeed the answers did not make sense. He didn't know the name of the place he worked?! A young man like that making \$24/hour? Now since his suspicions were up, when the passenger told him to turn down Eastwood going west, Saeed refused, and pulled over next to the 7-11, a very well-lighted public place. That is when I pulled up behind him and flashed by brights. When the passenger asked him, "Is that your buddy?", Saeed answered, "Yes."

We eventually went to the Police Station at Lincoln and Bryn Mawr, where we reported what had happened. We happened to speak to the desk officer who had taken in the first report of a knifepoint robbery at Ardmore and Western. He showed us a picture, which confirmed our suspicions that we had the right suspect in our cabs, and on the video in our cabs also.

I spoke with the Detective at the number contained in the news article, and to the desk officer. None of them knew of how or who could gain access to the video. They suggested we go to the owners of the cabs to download and secure it.

In this case, the only crime committed was the "theft of service" on Saeed Abbasi. The CPD officers I spoke with do seem interested in having the video secured, but do not seem to know how to do it, or by whom it should be done.

We cabdrivers can stand by each other, and watch out for each other whenever possible. In this case, I was pretty careful about my actions, and stayed well away from any potential danger. I did the right thing and called the police three times, but they never showed up. Saeed and I got off lucky. Several other cabdrivers robbed by this young man have not been so lucky.

This incident points to a couple of things that we need to discuss with the CPD and with the BACP. One is that the "community alerts" that go out on the police website, while useful, are hard to monitor on an ongoing basis. This is particularly true for cabdrivers, because we are so scattered as a community. We work different schedules, areas, and live in hundreds of different areas of the city and suburbs. Second, the CPD in this case was not very responsive through the 911 calls. Of course, there was no actual crime being committed at the time, so maybe that is excusable. But given the nature of my suspicions, since confirmed, that we were talking about a potential knife-wielding robber, we should have at least expected to get a follow-up phone call to see if everything was all right. And third, the issue of access to video from our cabs keeps coming up, and we are not satisfied with the responses. We have been told the police have technicians who can access the video 24 hours a day. But no police officer we spoke with knew of who that was, or where they were located, or how to facilitate such access.

The UTCC has plans to improve this situation highlighted above, and to improve our relationship with the CPD. We will continue to look forward to meetings and discussions with the proper authorities within the CPD and BACP for resolution of our concerns, and an ongoing process of dialogue. ■



Taxi Cab Armed Robbery HY227696 - 2800 W. Ardmore 19APR15 06:00HRS
Male Black APX 6'00, 140lbs, 18-25YOA, blue hooded sweatshirt, gray sweat pants.
Picked up at Irving/Western. Displayed Knife & demanded USC.

TAXICAB ROBBERIES DISTRICTS 019 AND 020

About the Crimes:

Robberies have occurred where the offender solicits a ride and then robs the driver at knifepoint after reaching the requested location. Incident times and locations are listed below:

- 2800 block of W. Ardmore on 19 April 2015 at approximately 6:00 am.
- 2400 block of W. Eastwood on 23 April 2015 at approximately 9:25 pm.

About the Offender:

- In the incident on Ardmore, the offender was described as a male black, 18- 25 years old, approximately 6'0, 140 lbs, wearing a blue hooded sweatshirt and gray sweatpants. Offender was carrying a brown handbag/satchel.
- In the incident on Eastwood, the offender was described as a male black, 18 to 20 years old, wearing a black baseball cap and a Chi-

cago Bulls jacket.

What you can do:

- Drivers should ensure that their cabs are equipped with a working video surveillance system.
- Be aware of the situation and alert other taxi drivers and companies in the area about these crimes.
- Call 911 as soon as possible with a detailed description of any offenders including direction of flight.
- Remain calm and try to remember any unique characteristics of offender, such as scars or tattoos.

If you have any information Contact the Bureau of Detectives – Area North (312) 744-8263 Pattern P15-N-100(BA) RD#s HY227696, HY233505 Alert # P15-N-100BA 24 April, 2015

THE UTCC IS WORKING WITH THE POLICE DEPT. AND THE CAB COMPANIES ON SYSTEMS TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT ROBBERIES AND OTHER CRIMES AGAINST CABDRIVERS, AND WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT THEM.

CONTACT UTCC AT (773) 342-8822 AND/OR COME BY OUR OFFICE AT 2040 N. MILWAUKEE TO PICK UP LITERATURE, JOIN YOUR TAXI UNION AND FIND OUT HOW TO GET MORE INVOLVED.

Taxicab Robbery Suspect Charged!

On June 9, the UTCC received the following email from Chief John Escalante, Bureau of Detectives, Chicago Police Department:

"On May 27th of last week an arrest was made of the individual who was robbing taxi drivers by knife. I cannot put that offender's name in this email but this individual was charged with five armed robberies. Area Central Detectives charged the Taxi Cab knife robber with 5 Armed robbery charges, 3 from 18th District and 2 from 12th District. The offenders name was responsible for city-wide pattern 15-CWP-03. The following

cases were charged;
 HY-236282 Charged with Att. Armed Robbery 12th District case
 HY-263238 Charged with Armed Robbery 12th District case
 HY-209653 Charged with Armed Robbery 18th District case
 HY-175720 Charged with Armed Robbery 18th District case
 HY-199877 Charged with Armed Robbery 18th District case"

Following is the Press Release from the CPD.

Thanks to all the hard work of the UTCC, the BACP has increased the amount of time you have to come back from Short Trips at both airports! You now have ONE HOUR to go and come back! This was one of our 10 Point Plan from last year. We thank the Commissioner and her staff at BACP for this much needed reform.

AIRPORT SHORT TRIP FARES EXTENDED RETURN TIME

The Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) is increasing the maximum return time to O'Hare International Airport and Midway International Airport for taxicab drivers with short trip fares. The maximum allowed time for a short trip fare is now extended from 40 minutes to 60 minutes.

Effective immediately, the new maximum return time to the airport for short trip fares is sixty (60) minutes.

Short trip fare definition and boundaries remain the same. "Short Trip" means a passenger's destination is within the following boundaries for a trip originating at the specified airport:

O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

1. THE BOUNDARIES WITHIN THE CITY OF CHICAGO ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- ON THE SOUTH: IRVING PARK RD
- ON THE NORTH: HOWARD ST.
- ON THE EAST: NAGLE ST/ NARRAGANSETT
- ON THE WEST: THE CITY LIMITS

2. THE FOLLOWING SUBURBS ARE WITHIN THE SHORT TRIP BOUNDARIES:

- BENSENVILLE
- NILES
- DES PLAINES
- NORRIDGE
- ELK GROVE VILLAGE
- PARK RIDGE
- FRANKLIN PARK
- SCHILLER PARK
- HARWOOD HEIGHTS
- ROSEMONT

MIDWAY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

- ON THE SOUTH: 103RD STREET
- ON THE EAST: LOOMIS STREET
- ON THE NORTH: CERMAK ROAD
- ON THE WEST: HARLEM AVENUE



NEWS RELEASE Chicago Police Department

Garry F. McCarthy
Superintendent

Jennifer Rottner
Assistant Director

For Immediate Release
May 28, 2015

Contact: Office of News Affairs
312-745-6110

Chicago Lawn Man Charged with Additional Robberies



Offender: Jaleel Johnson, 19
6900 block of S. Artesian

Charges: 4 felony counts of Robbery – Armed - Other Dangerous Weapon
1 felony count of Attempt Armed Robbery – Other Dangerous Weapon

Court: Central Bond Court, 26th and California – May 28, 2015

Narrative: Jaleel Johnson appeared on court on May 19, 2015 and charged in a robbery of a 21 year old female. The continued investigation by Detectives in Area Central resulted in Johnson being identified in 5 other incidents. These incidents occurred in the 012th and 018th Districts with dates ranging from 07 March 2015 to 16 May 2015. No further information is available at this time.

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312-745-6110 · 3510 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60653 · Fax 312-745-6999

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR LOCAL SPONSORS



ANNOUNCEMENT

IT IS UP TO YOU CABDRIVERS TO BE HONEST AND NOT CHEAT THE SYSTEM. IT IS ALSO UP TO THE STARTERS TO CHECK WITH THE PASSENGERS WHEN THE DRIVER CLAIMS HE IS MAKING A SHORT TRIP.

WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN UTCC FOR \$100 PER YEAR?

Hmmmm—let's see.....

1. After 6 long years of struggling for a voice with the city, the companies, and the news media, we finally achieved a "seat at the table" last year. We now have professional, respectful relationships with: the BACP, Aldermen across the city, the CPD, the DOF, the officials at AH (400 W. Superior), the Airport officials, the MPEA Board of Directors, numerous contacts within the Chicago news media, and with Taxi Unions across the country
2. We submitted our "10-Point Plan For Cabdriver Income Improvement" last year to the Commissioner of BACP—so far we have gotten 1. A 10-20% decrease in the lease rates; 2. we got the "short trip" time increased to one hour; 3. the maximum fine at 400 W. Superior was reduced from \$1000 to \$400; 4. a Universal Dispatch App is in process to give us the opportunity to compete with the "ridesteal" industry in the streets; 5. we are working on reforming the MPEA stamp repayment system so we don't lose any more money out of our pockets; and, 6. we are still working on gaining a fare increase on the meter and other reforms
3. We have a place on the Taxicab Driver Fairness Task Force, and have taken a leadership role in pushing and advocating for concrete reforms to the Municipal Code of Chicago and the Rules and Regulations for Public Chauffeurs
4. We have successfully advocated for numerous cabdrivers receiving restitution (payback) for lease overcharges from the companies—we have gained the confidence of the drivers to file complaints, and we have worked with the city officials to identify and prosecute and punish the companies who do the wrong things
5. We maintain an office available for drivers that is open 18 hours a week, and at other times by appointment, to come and bring their issues and complaints for advice, advocacy and access to a Legal Plan for a lawyer try to get a dismissal or get the best deals at 400 W. Superior
6. There are some benefits, and plans to provide more—however, it takes resources to get them for you. We need your membership dues in order to do that.

There's more—but how much more do you need?

YOUR UNION. WORKING FOR YOU EVERY DAY. ARE YOU A MEMBER YET?

HOW YOU CAN JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN UTCC:

1. Come to our Membership Recruitment tables, fill out an Application, and pay by cash, check, money order or credit card
2. Come to our office at 2040 N. Milwaukee on Mon-Tues-Wed from 1-7 pm and fill out an Application and pay by cash, check, money order or credit card
3. Call in to our office during office hours and pay by credit card—(773) 342-8822
4. Go to our new Website at www.goutcc.org and pay using your credit card and Paypal
5. Go to our new website and download the Application, fill it out and send it in by mail. Be sure to send us your picture to www.utccmemberphotos@gmail.com.

BENEFITS AND SERVICES

The UTCC provides a broad range of services for our members and we have plans to provide much more once we obtain our minimum thousand dues-paying members to qualify for official Union status. We currently provide discount legal representation for BACP tickets written on Chauffeur's Licenses as part of our mission to Protect Your License. We also provide access to advocacy to resolve issues with the BACP, the DOF, the Dept. of Aviation, affiliations and references to where to obtain Free Legal Advice. More than this, we assist you to fight individual complaints against garages, the BACP and CPD and other Industry Grievances -- and run campaigns for change at the city, state, and federal levels which seek to protect the long-term interests of Taxi Drivers and empower you to fight back against corruption and exploitation, financial or otherwise.

Current Benefits of UTCC

- Legal Assistance at 400 W. Superior
 - \$10 co-pay for getting the best deal
 - \$60 discount on representation at Hearings
- Consultation on lease fraud and other driver issues

Instructions for membership:

- Fill out form below
- Bring to our office at 2040 N. Milwaukee to make a payment and get your picture taken for your Membership card
- Payment is \$100 per year
- Office hours: Mon-Tues-Wed 1-7 pm
- Or call for appointment: 773-342-8822

JOIN NOW!

NAME: (print) _____ GENDER: MALE/FEMALE

CHAUFFEUR LIC. #: _____ Lease Driver: Yes No Shift: Day Night Mix/Swing

Street Address: _____ Apt. # _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Cell Ph.: _____ Home: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Yearly Membership: \$100

Payment type: cash/credit/money order/check Amount received: _____ Due: _____ (within 6 weeks)

FOR MANY YEARS PASSED, THE UTCC HAS ESTABLISHED VERY GOOD RELATIONS WITH MANY FUNDERS IN THE AREA AND WE ARE SEEKING MORE. TODAY, WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND OUR GRATITUDE AND THANKS FOR THE CROSSROADS FUND OF CHICAGO FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE UTCC WORK AND MISSION WHICH IS SERVING CHICAGO'S TAXI DRIVERS, THEIR FAMILIES AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE.

—FAYEZ KHOZINDAR, UTCC CHAIR—